SURREY *matters*

A GRAND DAY OUT

Adventures in the Surrey countryside

IN THIS ISSUE

SPRING 2016

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surreycc.gov.uk

Surrey Choices
Every Life, Every Choice

Personal Assistance

Enabling Independence

Personal Assistance is a new service for Surrey Choices launched in April 2016. The aim of the service is to provide support to people with disabilities looking for Personal Assistants (PAs) to support them in their homes and community.

We are recruiting now!

Would you like to make a difference to someone's life?

Would you like to work flexible hours which work around you and the person you support?

Use your skills and experiences to support someone with disabilities to grow in independence in their home and community

We are looking for caring people with the motivation to transform people's lives

No experience required We will provide you with training

Want to find out more? Come along to one of our drop-in sessions:

Monday 6 June 2016
The Hub Redhill
10.00am-4.00pm

Wednesday 8 June 2016
The Hub Woking
10.00am-4.00pm

Call now on 01483 806806 for more information and to apply

☎ 01483 806806
07860 020130
✉ info@surreychoices.com
www.surreychoices.com

Welcome

Clare Curran

Cabinet Member for Children and Families Wellbeing

With the promise of longer days and warmer temperatures on the way there's more reason than ever to get out and explore Surrey. Our spring issue is packed with inspiration for a great summer day out, from a bus trip through the Surrey Hills on page 8 to Leith Hill's spectacular views on page 17.

Scenic Surrey will also be in the global spotlight this summer as the world's greatest festival of cycling Prudential RideLondon returns to the county, including a brand new event for younger and less experienced cyclists – find out more on page 7.

Although we live in a beautiful county there are people who need our support. On page 14 we meet social worker Nicky Simpson to learn about her job on the frontline of Surrey children's services, and how everyone can play a role in keeping children safe from abuse. And there's always room for improvement – on page 14 we discover how a council fund can help pay for projects that, however big or small, make a real difference to people's lives. Why not think about applying for funding that could improve your community?

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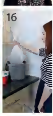
In each issue, our features highlight real-life examples of Surrey County Council's priorities. Find out more at **surreycc.gov.uk/ourpriorities**

If you would like this magazine in large print, on tape or in another language, please let us know. For advertising opportunities, email **surreymattersads@surreycc.gov.uk**



News

Surrey Matters needs you

Do you know any budding young writers, photographers or graphic designers? We're looking for a team of young people aged 16 to 25 to get involved with producing the next issue of Surrey Matters. The team will go behind the scenes to learn about planning features, interviewing and coming up with ideas for photoshoots, and they'll also get the chance to share their views on the issues that matter to young people in Surrey. Visit **surreycc.gov.uk/surreymatters** to find out more.

Give volunteering a go

Volunteering will be celebrated across the UK during Volunteers Week starting 1 June. With an extra five days of events planned for 2016, it's set to be bigger than ever. Here in Surrey there'll be plenty of opportunities for people to give volunteering a go.

It's also a great chance to thank the residents who signed up to volunteer following a campaign run by Surrey County Council early this year. To find out more about events happening where you are, and advice on how you can find the perfect volunteering role to suit your interests and the time you have available, visit **surreycc.gov.uk/volunteer**

VOLUNTEERS' WEEK
The Big Celebration

THE COW PARADE COMES TO SURREY

Looking for a different way to explore Surrey? For the next three months, you'll be able to spot lots of brightly-coloured cows in villages, towns and on hills across Surrey, all as part of the Surrey Hills Cow Parade.

Each cow has been sponsored and decorated by a company, community group, individual or school, often working with local artists. At the end of August the cows will be auctioned off for charity, with some of the proceeds helping to protect the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. To find out more, including how to download maps and an app to help you spot the cows, visit **cowparadesurreyhills.com**

BETTER PAVEMENTS ARE ON THE WAY

Dozens of miles of Surrey's worst pavements will be repaired and rebuilt by spring 2017, with many relaid from scratch. The focus will be on damaged and worn out pavements that are used a lot to get to shops, hospitals, schools and doctors' surgeries. Find out more at **surreycc.gov.uk/maintainingpavements**

A royal celebration

Events are taking place throughout Surrey to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday. In March, volunteers across the county helped keep Surrey's beautiful towns, villages and countryside litter free by taking part in Clean for the Queen, Britain's biggest ever litter pick.

Celebrations for the Queen's official birthday kick off in London from 10 June and communities across the county will be holding their own street parties and local events to mark this historic occasion. Visit **surreycc.gov.uk/queensbirthdaystreetparties** to find out how you can get involved in hosting or attending a street party.

In brief...

GETTING SURREY ACTIVE

With almost one in four adults in Surrey being classed as inactive, and that number rising as people get older, a new scheme is being introduced to improve the health of over-50s across the county. If you'd like to get more active a full list of what's on offer, including bowls, swimming, and dance and exercise classes, can be found at **activesurrey.com/over50s** or by calling 07573 976 702

FREE SUPPORT TO HELP SMOKERS QUIT

Do you want support and advice to help you stop smoking? Surrey County Council is now working with Quit51 to help smokers quit cigarettes and lead a healthier lifestyle. Call 0800 622 6968, text 'smokefree' to 66777 or visit **healthysurrey.org.uk** for more information on how they can help you.

LEARN WITH ME

If you have children aged five or under, or work with young children, you can get free ideas and advice on fun activities that can help them learn and develop. Just head to **surreycc.gov.uk/earlylearning**. You'll find lots of resources which have been developed by experts to help give young children the best start in life.

RESIDENT EXPERIENCE BOARD

Would you like to have your say on your experience of Surrey County Council services, and how you think this could be improved? The Resident Experience Board is a new committee that gives people in Surrey the chance to share their views at meetings and help shape the future of council services. Find out more at **surreycc.gov.uk/residentexperienceboard** or by calling 03456 009 009.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Esther Hayes, volunteer trustee for Woking charity Surrey Care Trust

Can you tell us a bit about Surrey Care Trust?
The trust helps local people who have been held back through disadvantage and hardship from an early age or from setbacks later on in life. We provide training, mentoring and support to help people gain skills and confidence, and to improve their chances of finding work and a brighter, more fulfilling future.

Why did you decide to become a trustee, and what does the role involve? I was looking for a way to volunteer using my business experience, so five years ago became a trustee for the charity. The role is about making sure a charity is doing what it was set up to do in an appropriate way. This involves attending board meetings and helping make decisions, for example about recruiting new staff. I work full time so don't have a lot of time to offer, but other volunteer trustees also take on day-to-day activities, such as mentoring.

Are there particular skills or experience you need to become a trustee? It all depends on the charity. Energy, enthusiasm and commitment are always important, but a charity might also be looking for someone who has a specific skill or direct experience of using their services. All trustees will also need to know or learn about their legal responsibilities in helping to lead a charity.

What's the best thing about being a trustee, and what do you feel most proud of?
It's enormously rewarding to hear how our programmes help people get back on their feet, particularly helping people who have struggled at school but go on to find employment or into further education – that's brilliant.

All of the services our teams provide are amazing and invaluable to those who've used them, so it's impossible to say which I feel most proud of. Personally I've enjoyed joining in with some of the fundraising, most recently, and my husband is cycling the Prudential RideLondon Surrey 100 in aid of the Trust this year.

Why do you think volunteering is important?
For me, volunteering offers the chance to give something back to the community and make a real difference. The people the trust helps would otherwise have very little support, so we make a huge impact and that is very satisfying.

Volunteering opportunities at Surrey Care Trust include working with young people, crewing and training on the trust's Swingbridge boats and helping at events like the annual Surrey5Peaks. To find out how you can get involved, visit **surreycaretrust.co.uk** or call 01483 426 990

The Swingbridge Project

Mentoring

Baby first aid

Get ready for Prudential RideLondon

The world's greatest festival of cycling returns to Surrey on Sunday 31 July and with a brand new event planned there are even more reasons to get involved in the action

What's on?

Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100
Up to 27,500 amateur cyclists will take on the 100 mile route through some of Surrey's finest towns and villages before heading back into London for the finish on The Mall

Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 46
Brand new for 2016, this is a shorter version of the 100 for younger or less experienced cyclists. The route heads out of London across Hampton Court Bridge before heading along Hampton Court Way and back towards the capital

Prudential RideLondon-Surrey Classic
The world's best male cyclists will battle it out on Surrey's roads and hills to get themselves ready for a sprint finish in London

Make a day of it

There are lots of events planned along the route, so why not head along and enjoy the festival atmosphere while cheering on the cyclists

Last year participants in the 100 event raised over £12 million for charity and your support can help spur them on to the finish line

Road closures

Some roads in Surrey will be closed during the events but the introduction of the Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 46 will allow slower riders in the 100 to take the shorter route. This means the closures from Hampton Court Bridge through to the A25 junction with Sherbourne Road near Shere will be reopened around 30-45 minutes earlier than in previous years.

Find out more

Visit **prudentialridelondon.co.uk/info-hub** email **helpdesk@ridelondon.co.uk** or call **0345 8949773** to find out about road closure information, access requirements, events around the route and where to watch

Don't forget to follow **@SurreyTravel** on Twitter for road closure and reopening updates on event day

[illegible], founder of Christopher's Smile, volunteered during the 2015 event

"Our Christopher's Smile team of volunteers thoroughly enjoyed the day in Weybridge. There was a great atmosphere from the [illegible]"

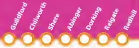
Want to volunteer at this year's event? Visit **prudentialridelondon.co.uk** to find out how

[illegible] raised money for a local charity when he took part.

"It was such an amazing experience taking part in the Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100 for Shooting Star Chase – you get so much support from the fundraising team during training and spectators lined the streets to cheer us on."

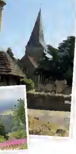
A grand day out

Could leaving the car at home and catching a bus be the perfect way to explore Surrey this summer? Godalming residents **Benedict, Emily and Henry the dachshund** hopped on the number 32 to find out.



The sun on your face, the smell of freshly cut grass, long walks and pub lunches – everybody loves a summer day out in the countryside. Here in Surrey we're lucky enough to have some of the most beautiful landscapes in the country, perfect for day trippers.

But did you know that you can reach some of the county's top countryside spots by bus?



A great example is the number 32, which heads right through the Surrey Hills and Tillingbourne Valley. We asked Benedict Barton to catch the 32 for a day out in the Surrey Hills with his girlfriend Emily East and their dachshund Henry.

"We took the bus from Guildford to Shere for a stroll around the village and in the fields above it. We both really enjoy walking and so does Henry, despite his little legs. We stopped for a lovely pub lunch at The William Bray and then got back on the bus and went for a look around in Chilworth.

"The whole stretch of the 32 route that goes through Abinger, Gomshall and Shere is so lovely – the river by the church in Shere is one of our favourite places to go.

"Leaving the car at home and using the bus instead takes a little bit more planning but it's well worth it. We didn't have to think about where to park and it also meant we could have a glass of wine with lunch.

"The bus tickets we used meant we could jump on and off as much as we liked throughout the day, so we could [illegible] off the bus for a wander whenever [illegible] wanted to."

[illegible] leaving [illegible] explore [illegible] at **travelsmartsurrey.info**

[illegible] information about exploring [illegible] Hills, visit **surreyhills.org**

Explore Surrey by bus

With a Discovery bus ticket, you're free to explore – the ticket offers unlimited travel for a day across the south of England. A family day ticket for up to two adults and three children is just £16 and individual tickets are £8.50 per adult and £7 per child, so there's no better time to leave the car at home and try the bus.

Fancy a day out in the Surrey Hills?

Here are some ideas for what you could do along the way:

- Book yourself a lesson at the Abinger Cookery School **abingercookeryschool.com** 01306 730478
- Have some lunch in the riverside garden at the Compasses Inn, Gomshall **thecompassesgomshall.co.uk** 01483 202506
- Take the kids to see the ducks in Tillingbourne stream, which runs through Shere **sheredelight.com**

Curtains up

Surrey Matters goes behind the scenes with an extraordinary orchestra.

What does music mean to you? Maybe it helps to wake you up in the morning, relaxes you in the evening, or brings back memories of a favourite place or person.

For members of the UP Orchestra it's the gateway to new experiences. The orchestra gives young people with special educational needs and disabilities the chance to compose and perform music together.

The UP Orchestra was set up in 2014 by Surrey Arts – part of Surrey County Council – with funding from Arts Council England and was the first orchestra of its kind in the South East. Since then it's grown from 12 to 40 members. Jim Pinchen, Surrey Arts Programme Manager, explains what makes the orchestra so special.

"The whole ethos is that it's accessible," he says. "That can mean providing an instrument suited to a young person's ability, playing music they enjoy listening to, and rehearsing and performing in accessible venues. It's also free to attend, making it financially accessible.

"It's a platform for young people [illegible] which can [illegible] important for those [illegible] that affect their speech [illegible] teaches them other skills [illegible] work to literacy [illegible] writing [illegible] technology when using [illegible] and mix sound."

The [illegible] people in the [illegible] make real [illegible] not only in music but also [illegible] Callaghan [illegible] Heart Arts [illegible] that works with [illegible] charity [illegible] "Everyone [illegible] but we make [illegible]"

The orchestra's [illegible] have been a huge [illegible] not least last [illegible] when they performed at the Royal Albert Hall as part of the [illegible] celebrations. For Jim, that was the highlight of his time with the orchestra. "With that performance they redefined people's perceptions of young people with disabilities making music," he says. "They rocked the Royal Albert Hall to its foundations!"

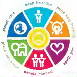
To find out more about the orchestra visit **surreymusichub.com**. For more information about how Surrey County Council supports young people with special educational needs, head to **surreycc.gov.uk/send2020** or call 0300 200 1004.

Andrea Purdie's son Charlie, aged 12, plays drums in the orchestra.

"Charlie is a great drummer," she says. "But joining the orchestra has given him the chance to use music for social interaction, and to perform in auditoriums rather than just in his bedroom. The whole experience has been absolutely brilliant for him, and we're so proud of how far he's come."

Protecting our vulnerable children is a priority for Surrey County Council. Find out more at: **surreycc.gov.uk/ourpriorities**

Six steps to a happier you



While it's essential to look after your physical health, it's just as important to take care of your mental health. The wheel of well being is a new tool that can help you do just that. **Sue Sweeney**, aged 66 from Staines-upon-Thames, spent a week working her way around the wheel to find out how it can make a difference.

Monday
Planet: Care

"I've always enjoyed doing my bit to look after our environment and days like this make it much easier. With the sun out, it means I don't need to turn my lights on and can also hang my washing outside, both of which save electricity"

Give it a go: Do your bit to look after our planet by recycling. Visit **recycleforsurrey.org.uk** to find out what can be recycled where you live

Tuesday
Spirit: Give

"Giving to other people makes me feel great. Since losing friends and family to cancer I've admired the work of the Princess Alice Hospice so I dropped off a bag of unwanted clothes at one of their shops"

Give it a go: Volunteer for a charity or help out in your local community. Head to **surreycc.gov.uk/volunteer** for advice on how to get started.

Wednesday
Place: Take notice

"Noticing nature helps reduce stress, so on a trip to the vets with my dog I made sure I took in my local area. Runnymede is a very green place which I find really calming. I've also seen some amazing daybreaks and sunsets that I might not have noticed before.

Give it a go: Spend some time outside [illegible] to take in your surroundings [illegible] about where to go, have a [illegible] **surreycc.gov.uk/explore**

Thursday
Mind: Keep learning

"Instead of watching television, I spent my evening reading the newspaper to find out what was going on around the world. I also exercised my mind by doing a crossword"

Give it a go: Book a class and try out a new skill. Visit **surreycc.gov.uk/adultlearning** for inspiration

Friday
People: Connect

"Close relationships with my friends and family mean a lot to me so it was lovely to have a long chat on the phone with my son. My husband and I then had a nice lunch together. We also got an invite to a barbecue with some friends – it's good to keep in touch"

Give it a go: If you're feeling worried or stressed, talk to your friends and family or contact First Steps (**firststeps-surrey.nhs.uk**/0808 801 0325)

Saturday
Body: Be active

"I've managed to lose a couple of pounds this week after spending an extra few minutes on my mini trampoline each morning – and a healthy body helps a healthy mind"

Give it a go: Try yoga or pilates, or go for a run

Visit **wheelofwellbeing.org** to find out more

Keeping families healthy is a priority for Surrey County Council. Find out more at: **surreycc.gov.uk/ourpriorities**

Funding for the future

How grants from the Community Improvements Fund can support projects that make Surrey a better place to live.

Sometimes a good idea or a valuable service can have a huge impact on a community. But turning ideas into reality and keeping services running isn't always easy. That's where the Community Improvements Fund comes in. Set up by the Leader of Surrey County Council David Hodge in 2012, the fund has supported over 100 projects with grants of £10,000 to £30,000 since its launch.

Connecting communities

For some elderly residents in Milford, near Godalming, this came in the shape of a new minibus to take them to their much loved social centre. The Clockhouse Manager Jessica Hilsdon explains: "Lots of elderly people are incredibly lonely – they might not see anyone for days or even weeks. The Clockhouse is a place where people can meet, enjoy homemade food and try activities like pilates, crafts or computer classes."

"The Clockhouse is the greatest thing since sliced bread," adds John Phillips, aged 90, who visits every week. "It's a marvellous place to come to."

The minibus service plays a key role, with nearly 200 passengers using it to travel to and from The Clockhouse every week. "Our buses cost over £50,000 because they're wheelchair adapted," says Jessica. "When we found out we needed to replace one of them we simply didn't know where to get that kind of money – so it was amazing when we learnt we were able to apply for a large proportion of it from Surrey County Council's Community Improvements Fund. We made up the rest through other local grants and fundraising."

Improving access

A grant from the Community Improvements Fund has also helped Sunbury charity Dramatize, which runs theatre, music and dance sessions for adults with learning disabilities. To help more people benefit, the charity moved to a new building which they could renovate to improve access. They received £11,000 to help with renovations, including installing a sensory room.

"Moving to and renovating our new venue has helped us gain much more community awareness," says Dramatize's Karen Bradley. "Around 50 people use our service now, compared with the 15 to 20 who used it before we received the funding."

For details of how to apply and examples of how the fund has helped different projects, head to **surreycc.gov.uk/communityimprovementsfund**

For more information about The Clockhouse, visit **clockhouse.org.uk** or call 01483 420668 and to find out more about Dramatize, visit **dramatize.co.uk** or call 01784 250816

Who can apply?

Any Surrey charity or community group can bid for funding from the Community Improvements Fund. It may be to pay for a makeover of a village hall, or even something simple like a ramp or extra signs to improve accessibility. This year there's also an extra £1 million available to improve local shopping parades.

To be eligible you should ideally have a project that's already underway, but if you have a great idea that's in its planning stages you're still in with a chance of getting a grant of up to £30,000 to make your plans a reality.

Visit **surreycc.gov.uk/communityimprovementsfund** to find out how

Surrey County Council Leader David Hodge says:

"This fund empowers communities to improve their own local areas and make a real difference to the lives of Surrey's residents. This year, we're particularly looking for bids which will improve [illegible] shopping areas, but we're also looking [illegible] hearing about any projects which [illegible] county an even better place to live."

Keeping children in Surrey safe

Protecting Surrey's children is a key priority for Surrey County Council. But what's it like to work on the front line of Surrey's children's services? We met Assistant Principal Social Worker **Nicky Simpson** to find out more.

Can you tell us about a typical day in the life of a children's social worker?
It's really varied. I could be attending meetings with parents and teachers or visiting children at their home, school or in hospital. Helping children talk about their thoughts, views and wishes is a key part of the role.

In some cases, a parent may have drug or alcohol dependency issues or mental health problems but may not be aware of the impact on their child. So a big part of my job is working with parents to help them resolve these issues. Children are at the heart of everything we do in the team – so whatever the day's work involves, it will always be focused on getting the best outcome for them.

What drew you to a career in social work?
When I was looking after my three children I realised it wasn't too late to go back to school so did an Open University Degree in Psychology. I became really interested in the social care module and decided social work was the path I wanted to take.

What are the highlights of working in this field and for Surrey children's services?
Social work can be emotionally draining but also very rewarding. It's great when I'm able to build positive working relationships with families and see the changes they make that then benefit their children.

The team here at Surrey is fantastic. It's a collaborative environment, and managers and senior staff understand the pressures of the role which makes them invaluable sources of support.

Protecting our vulnerable children is a priority for Surrey County Council. Find out more at: **surreycc.gov.uk/ourpriorities**

Child abuse and neglect is unfortunately never far from the news. Is it prevalent in Surrey?
Unfortunately abuse can happen in any town, on any street and in any home. There is no particular type of person who will abuse and it can happen in any socio-economic group – here in Surrey it's no different. Sometimes the incident may be a one-off but it could also be part of a cycle of poor parenting which can be passed down through families.

Is there anything people can do to help protect children in Surrey?
Everyone has a role to play in protecting children. Understanding the signs is the first step but it's also important that people come forward and report any worries they have. Anyone concerned should call 01483 518505 (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday), call the out of hours line on 01483 517898 or visit **gov.uk/reportchildabuse**

Spot the signs of child abuse

Sometimes abuse isn't easy to spot. It could include changes in the child's behaviour, character or mood. Here are some possible signs to help you identify if your concerns should be acted upon:

- Has the child's behaviour suddenly changed?
- Have they gone from being happy and outgoing to withdrawn?
- Has their behaviour become aggressive?
- Are they showing sexualised behaviour?
- Are there any visible signs, such as bruising or injuries to their body?
- Do they always appear hungry or take other children's food?
- Are they being overly obedient?
- Are they frequently late or absent from school?
- Are they constantly tired?
- Do they have consistently poor hygiene?

Looking for the next step in your social work career?

Do you want to put down roots in a permanent children's social work role that offers competitive pay and benefits, well-managed caseloads, supportive teams and great opportunities for training and career progression? Surrey children's services need experienced social workers to help make a difference to the lives of children and their families across the county – visit **surreycc.gov.uk/childrenssocialwork** to apply today.

Food for thought

More food waste was collected from Surrey residents in caddies in 2015 than the year before, but there's still lots that ends up in the rubbish bin. If everyone put all their food waste in a caddy for collection it would save taxpayers over £3 million a year, so we asked some of our readers for their tips on using their caddies to see if we can make 2016 a record breaking year.

Caroline Ledger, Ashford

"We use our caddy all the time. It's invaluable when you have small children as they can create a huge amount of food waste. We put a bowl on the side in the kitchen to put scraps on before plates go in the dishwasher."

Theresa Paler, Woking

"Food like fish skin and bones can be a bit smelly, so I wrap it in newspaper and put it straight into the outside food waste bin. Now we can use plastic bags I might pop it in an old bread or salad bag."

Ben East, Forest Green

"If something went past its use-by date I tended to put it straight in the bin, but keeping my caddy next to the bin reminds me to take the food out of the packaging and put it in the caddy instead."

Emily Von Rerbintz, Bookham

"It's important to make it easily accessible so that children can put food waste in it, as well as visitors who may try and help with the clearing up. There's nothing more frustrating than finding food waste in the main bin!"

Bag it up

You can now line your food waste caddy with plastic bags thanks to new technology at the anaerobic digestion plants which turn Surrey's food waste into energy and fertiliser. This follows feedback that compostable liners are expensive and can tear or leak, but you can still use up any that you already have.

Pedal bin liners, shopping bags which are coming to the end of their life, or other types of food bag, such as bread, salad or cereal bags, can all be used. You can just tie them up and drop them straight into your outside food waste bin. But black bin liners can't be used.

All cooked and uncooked food waste is collected weekly from most homes in Surrey on the same day as your rubbish or recycling.

To find out more about food waste collections, visit your local district or borough council website, or go to **recycleforsurrey.org.uk**

Caring for our environment is a priority for Surrey County Council. Find out more at surreycc.gov.uk/ourpriorities

What happens to food waste once it's collected?

Food waste is taken to an anaerobic digestion plant, where machinery splits and removes the plastic bags. The food waste is ground up and pasteurised before being passed through heated tanks.

Energy from the biogas is used to generate electricity, [illegible] power homes [illegible] is used as a [illegible]

VISIT *Leith Hill*

Set in the stunning Surrey Hills and famed for its spectacular views, Leith Hill is the highest point in South East England. We discover more about why this beauty hotspot is a great place to visit.

Stay on track

Whether you arrive on foot or start your journey from one of the many nearby car parks you can explore Leith Hill your way, with a choice of trails suitable for different abilities. Make your way to the top through woodland and farmland and look out for the handy signs to guide you in the right direction. Keep your eyes peeled for local wildlife – you might even spot deer.

Breathtaking views

There's a lot to see from the top of the 18th century gothic Leith Hill Tower which sits at the hill's highest point. Climb the 74 steps to the top of the tower and you'll be an impressive 1,029ft above sea level – that's higher than the Shard and the Eiffel Tower. You'll be rewarded with sweeping views across 14 counties and on a clear day you can even see the English Channel and Canary Wharf. If you're feeling peckish it's the perfect spot for a picnic and you can also buy food and drinks at the base of the tower.

A perfect pit stop

There are lots of friendly local villages nestled within the Surrey Hills, perfect for exploring after a visit to Leith Hill. In Coldharbour, just a few miles south of Dorking, you'll find The Plough Inn which serves a menu of locally produced food and real ales from the pub's own brewery. Another hidden gem is the Coldharbour cricket pitch – the highest cricket ground in the south of England with stunning views across the hills. Ockley, Forest Green and Friday Street, with its beautiful reflective hammer pond, are just a handful of other picturesque spots well worth a visit along the way.

Would you like to have your town or village featured in the next issue of Surrey Matters? Email us at surreymatters@surreycc.gov.uk or call 03456 009 009

Surrey Matters met some locals and visitors to find out what they think of the area.

John Hopper, owner of the Plough Inn in Coldharbour

"The community is what makes Coldharbour special. A very unique bunch of people live here and they all look out for each other. There are some good local events, like our village day on the August Bank Holiday. And the beer is great of course!"

Karen and Peter Jackson from Bookham

"We often visit the villages around here, like Ockley and Warnham, and it's lovely to come up the hill to the tower on a sunny day. The views are amazing and yet you're so close to London."

Seamus Gallagher from London

"I live in London but come to Surrey to visit my son and we often come up to Leith Hill after school. We like exploring different routes to the top of the hill and sometimes bring a picnic."

What's on
JUNE-SEPTEMBER

4 June
Vineyard tour and wine tasting
Albury Vineyard, Albury

Enjoy a vineyard tour overlooking the Surrey Hills, followed by a tasting of some award-winning wines.
07768 863650
alburyvineyard.com

4, 10, 11, 17, 18 June
Summer Exhibition
Surrey Artists Open Studios, Cranleigh

Meet artists and makers, browse completed collections and see work in progress at this summer exhibition.
01483 519285
surreyopenstudios.org.uk

18 June
Oxted Food Festival
Master Park, Oxted

Broaden your tastes at this festival which brings street food to Oxted. There'll be a range of artisan food and drink, cookery demonstrations for adults and children, and live music. 11am-6pm.
oxtedfoodfestival.com

25-28 June
Strawberry Fair Food Festival
Priory Farm, Redhill

Celebrate summer at this annual food festival and enjoy homemade lunch from the farm.
01737 823304
prioryfarm.co.uk

3 July
Horton Country Park Tour
Epsom

Explore and learn about the history and wildlife of the park during this tour with the countryside team. Meet at 2pm at the Information Centre.
01372 745 224
hortoncountrypark.co.uk

6-7 August
Frimley Lodge Live
Frimley Lodge Park

Sit back and relax or dance the evening away at this year's event, with live music including everything from eighties rock and reggae to a celebration of swing. 3.30pm-10.30pm
01276 707600
surreyheath.gov.uk

11 August
Digital comic making workshop
The Lightbox, Woking

This interactive workshop gives teenagers the chance to use a tablet to create a fun digital comic they can share with friends. Advance booking required.
01483 737800
thelightbox.org.uk

19-21 August
Weyfest
The Rural Life Centre, Farnham

Enjoy a summer festival on your doorstep, with over 30 hours of live music, tasty food, camping and plenty to occupy the kids.
0844 844 2920
weyfest.co.uk

3 September
Star Gazing
Painshill Park, Cobham

Get lost in the Milky Way, spot Veil Nebula and observe Saturn as you gaze up at the night sky on a tour of constellations with Walton Astro Group. 7.30pm-10pm. Advance booking required.
01932 868113
painshill.co.uk

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Which famous children's train can you catch a ride on at Drusillas Park?

You can also enter by sending the answer with your name, address and phone number to Surrey Matters, Room G29, County Hall, Penrhyn Road, Kingston Upon Thames, KT1 2DN. For terms and conditions, visit **surreycc.gov.uk/surreymatters**

*Allows entry for a year for a group of up to four people

You can write to Surrey Matters: Room G29, County Hall, Penrhyn Road, Kingston Upon Thames, KT1 2DN. Produced by Surrey County Council Communications Team and printed on 100% recycled FSC® paper. Please recycle this magazine. DC/04/16/CS3264.

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